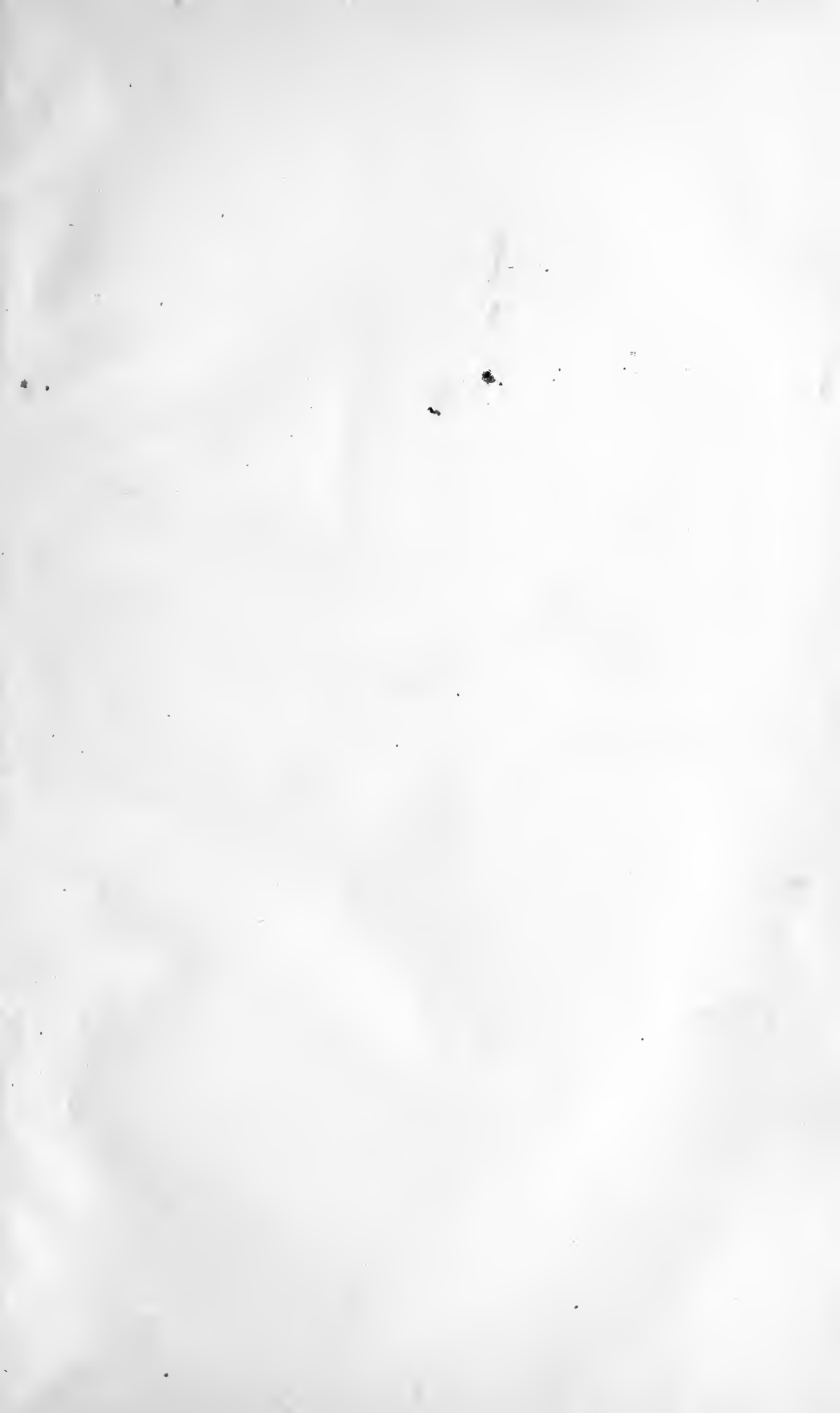


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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS
OF THE
HON. ROBERT C. WINTHROP,

AT THE
ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PEABODY TRUSTEES
OF SOUTHERN EDUCATION, IN NEW YORK,

6 OCTOBER, 1893.



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GENTLEMEN OF THE PEABODY BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Glad as I am to be with you once more, I feel almost as if I owed an apology for coming, and for presuming, with so many infirmities, to take my seat at the head of this table, and to preside again over your deliberations. Nothing, indeed, would have tempted me to make the effort, had I not been warned, from various quarters, of the danger of there not being a quorum present for the important business which awaits us.

We meet under impressive circumstances, whether we look at what has occurred, and is occurring, in the world at large or in our own beloved country. No year of the more than a quarter of a century since this Trust was created has witnessed events more momentous than the year which has elapsed since our last meeting. The violent struggle for what is called "Home Rule" in old England; the great contention about silver and gold in our own land; the Panama scandal in France; the terrible naval catastrophe off Tripoli in the Mediterranean; the not less terrible catastrophe at Ford's Theatre in Washington; the protracted and happily successful arbitration of the Behring Straits Seal Fisheries; the extra session of Congress to provide relief for the financial and social troubles which have pervaded our country; and above all the

wonderful World's Fair at Chicago, exhibiting the marvellous advance of the United States in art, science, and industry of all sorts, and especially in architecture; — these and many other things, — crimes, casualties, and catastrophes, — have concurred to render this Columbian Year in the highest degree exceptional and memorable, — almost an *Annus Mirabilis*, such as was sung of by Dryden more than two hundred years ago, — and to call off the public mind from its ordinary objects of attention.

But we need not look beyond our own little circle for occurrences which cannot fail to have impressed us deeply. Since you last met and parted, on the 12th of October, 1892, — the opening day of the Columbian Year, — no less than four of our most esteemed and valued members have been taken from us by death. No one of them had failed to manifest a deep and active interest in our work. Only one of them was of exceptionally advanced age like myself. From each of the other three alike we might confidently have counted on continued and valuable services to the very close of our Trust.

The Honorable Randall L. Gibson, of Louisiana, was called first. He died at the Hot Springs in Arkansas on the 15th of December last, — only two months after he had attended our meeting and had taken a prominent part in its proceedings. He was elected in October, 1888, as the successor of the late Judge Thomas C. Manning, and had thus been a member of our Board for four years. A graduate of Yale University and one of its recent anniversary orators, a Representative in Congress and afterwards a Senator of the United States until his death, an accomplished and genial gentleman, he had every claim to the regard and affection of those associated with him in public or in private life. He was particularly instrumental in the original institution and organization of the Tulane University in New Orleans. I recall an interesting correspondence which I had with him when we happened to be

together in Paris, in 1882, and when he had been called by Mr. Tulane into his confidential counsels in regard to his then contemplated endowment. That endowment was undoubtedly one of the many rich results of Mr. Peabody's magnetic example, and Mr. Gibson called upon me for whatever information and advice I could give him from my experience in this Trust. I need not say that I gave them to him with all my heart; and that was the beginning of a friendship and an intimacy which I highly valued. I will not attempt to dwell longer on his character or services, as there are others of our Board who will desire to pay some tribute to his memory.

Hardly more than a month had elapsed after the death of Senator Gibson, when we were shocked by the announcement that Ex-President Hayes was no more. He died at his home in Fremont, Ohio, on the 17th of January last. Elected in October, 1877, to the vacancy created by the death of the Hon. Samuel Watson, of Tennessee, General Hayes had been associated with us for more than fifteen years, and had notably distinguished himself by his devotion to our work. That work, indeed, could hardly have sustained a greater loss. In common with the Slater Trustees, of whom he was the President, we had relied confidently on his services in the great cause of national education at least to the end of our own Trust. His general career and character have been abundantly and admirably delineated in the tributes which have been paid him by others. Nothing, certainly, could have been juster or happier than those of President Gilman of Johns Hopkins University, and of Dr. Curry of our own Board, both of whom were associated with him in the Slater Trust. "He was a man," said President Gilman, "of lofty ideals, of unfailing patriotism, and of unselfish devotion to the good of his fellow-men. To his lasting honor be it remembered that after retiring from the highest station in the land he devoted his strength and time, without thought of reward, to philan-

thropy and education." Dr. Curry, on the same occasion, most felicitously alluded to Ex-President Hayes as having "solved the problem," so often propounded by the press, of "what should be done with our Ex-Presidents" so as not "to lose to the country their gathered experience and wisdom." "He consecrated his sound judgment," said Dr. Curry, "his wide intelligence, his tenderness, his generosity, — all the powers of body, mind, and heart, — to the illiterate and the unfortunate, and literally went about, over the whole land, doing good. Identifying himself with national organizations of charities, he was an effective worker in behalf of Prison Reform and the bettering of the condition of the Indians. In all matters of education he was deeply interested. The education of the negro appealed strongly to his better nature and to his best activities." I eagerly adopt these tributes and make them a part of our own Report, as they are of the Slater Report, adding only an expression of the warm regard and affection with which General Hayes in these latter years had inspired me personally, and which I had the best reason for thinking were not unreciprocated.

But still other bereavements were in reserve for our little circle. On the 30th of June last we received the sad tidings that Mr. Anthony J. Drexel had died at Carlsbad in Germany, where he had gone for his health. Born in Philadelphia in 1826, and educated in her schools, he delighted to identify himself with his birthplace, and to do all in his power to promote her prosperity and welfare. At an early age he entered the banking house of his father in that city; and that was the scene of his labors, and I might almost say the object of his love, to the end of his life. Under the skilful and devoted management of his associates and himself, that banking house has long been one of the most important financial institutions of the world, and is as well known at this day in Paris and London as in Philadelphia and New York. He had co-operated with

his friend Mr. Pierpont Morgan, and with Mr. Morgan's excellent father before him, in giving it a character and a success which left it with hardly a rival at his death. Meantime the wealth which he had accumulated personally was used by him with a liberality and a munificence which has commanded the admiration and gratitude of all around him. I need but name "The Institute of Art, Science, and Industry" which he founded and recently finished and furnished in his native city at a cost of nearly two millions of dollars. This will be the principal monument of his beneficence; but he was a philanthropist of the widest range, in heart and act, as well as a man of the most estimable and attractive personal character. The recital of his lesser endowments and daily charities, even if one half of them were known to anybody but himself, would far exceed the limits of a tribute like this. To our own Board, to which he was elected in 1881, twelve years ago, in place of Mr. Peabody's friend the late George W. Riggs, he had been specially useful in connection with our devoted Treasurer, and we had relied on him to aid in the care of our funds as long as we should hold them.

And now a fourth member of our Board has been taken from us while our Secretary was preparing his notifications for this meeting. The Honorable Hamilton Fish died at his summer residence, near West Point, on the 7th of September last, just a month ago. It was no untimely death, like the others of which I have spoken. Nothing was wanting of years, of service, or of honors, to make a longer term desirable to him or to the country. He had entered his eighty-sixth year. He had held offices of the greatest distinction and responsibility in State and Nation. He had been Governor of New York, Representative and Senator in Congress, and Secretary of State of the United States. More than any other man he had given character to the administration of General Grant during its whole term of eight years. No one can exaggerate the influences

for good over that administration and over the social condition of Washington which were exercised by Secretary Fish and his admirable wife. He inherited a full measure of patriotic spirit, as well as of personal integrity, from his honored father, of whom I said in my Centennial Oration at Yorktown, in 1881, after speaking of Alexander Hamilton: "Nor must his friend and fellow officer of the light infantry battalion — Major Nicholas Fish — fail to be mentioned, who shared with him the perils of the storming party, who lived a pure, patriotic, and useful life, and who gave the name of Hamilton to a son, whose recent discharge of the duties of Secretary of State has added fresh distinction to the name." From that patriotic father, too, he inherited a membership of the celebrated Society of the Cincinnati, of which for many years, and until his death, he was proud to be recognized as the President-General, wearing the same diamond badge which Washington wore as its first President-General. He was one of our original Board, appointed a Trustee, and named as our first Vice-President, with Bishop McIlvaine as the second, by Mr. Peabody himself in 1867. Only two of that original Board are left, — Mr. Evarts and myself, — who have been witnesses to his fidelity as Chairman of our Committee of Finance from our first organization until the infirmities of old age compelled him to withdraw from any further active service. Those infirmities were serious, and likely at any time within ten years past to culminate, as they have done at last, in sudden death. He repeatedly tendered a resignation of his relations to this Board, but the Board refused to accept it. I have here a letter from him, less than a year old, in reply to one which I had written to him on the subject of his proposed withdrawal, which gives an account of his health, and which is interesting in other respects. It is as follows, with an omission of only three or four lines which were indicated as personal and private: —

GLENCLYFFE, GARRISON'S P. O.,
PUTNAM COUNTY, N. Y., November 2, 1892.

MY DEAR MR. WINTHROP, — It is nearly a fortnight since I received your very kind letter, and there has been an almost continued struggle between the desire to acknowledge it and the energy and capacity to do so. Let me thank you for your very kind reference to me in your Annual Address; and I appreciate the tenderness and consideration of the Resolution adopted by the Trustees on the motion of Senator Gibson. But I feel that my age and my infirmities preclude the possibility of any further service on my part, and that you are entitled to a more efficient lieutenant.

Of the sixteen Trustees named by Mr. Peabody in 1867, all were considerably past the middle age of life. Grant, possibly, was the youngest; and he was forty-five years old. All had led busy lives of active employment, and of many responsibilities in their respective courses. I am not familiar with the statistics of Annuities, or of the duration of lives; but it strikes me as remarkable, that, at the expiration of twenty-five years, three of those sixteen remain. Long may *you* continue at their head! I am far from well. My principal ailment, which I am told is incurable, has not, it is true, — God be thanked! — made *much* progress during the past season; but it remains, liable to advance, and is very distressing. I am not able to take much exercise, — an occasional short drive, and, very seldom, a very short walk. I have not been five miles distant from where I am now sitting since I came here in May last, and did not attend the General Convention, — which, at last, has concluded its discussions on the Prayer Book, whereat we all must be thankful.

I am, my dear Mr. Winthrop,

Very sincerely your friend,

HAMILTON FISH.

The Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP, LL.D.,
BROOKLINE, MASS.

You will all desire, Gentlemen, to unite in a tribute to these four beloved associates whom we have lost, and I will suggest the appointment of Mr. Evarts, Bishop Whipple,

Mr. Courtenay, and Mr. Henry, to prepare a formal minute for our Records. Meanwhile I may well congratulate you, in conclusion, that whatever may have happened, of prosperous or of adverse fortune, in the world at large or in the little circle of our own Board, this Columbian Year, which is within a few days of its close, has been a year of signal success for our work and for the great cause in which we are engaged. It has eminently fulfilled the promise which was made for it on its first day, when on almost all the countless schoolhouses in the land the Stars and Stripes were raised, displayed, and saluted by the teachers and scholars. I witnessed the delight of the children in my own neighborhood. Popular education is now everywhere more and more recognized as a national concern, and no subject is more deeply at the heart of the American people. Normal Schools, and the Institutes which take their place in the summer season, have been largely multiplied in the Southern States; and you will learn from Dr. Curry's Report that their work has been "unusually vigorous." There was no such thing known there when our Trust was founded. Indeed, it might almost be said that when Mr. Peabody committed his millions to our disposal, there was not within those States a single scholar in anything which could be called a Free Common School. There are two millions and a half now. Of our great Normal College at Nashville, the accomplished President, Dr. Payne, very recently writes me: "The last year was the best in its history, and the future seems very assuring." Of the Winthrop Normal College for young ladies, at Columbia, South Carolina, President Johnson writes me: "We closed a most successful year on the 15th of June. The enrolment for the session was the largest in the history of the college." But I leave these and all other details of what has been accomplished to the Annual Report of our faithful and untiring General Agent, to whom we owe so much of it. I must not omit, however, the welcome

assurance which I have received from our Treasurer, that the income from our Fund, notwithstanding all the troubles of the times, will have been undiminished.

It has recently been suggested, in a leading religious paper, that the opening of the schools for another year is an event well worthy to be celebrated in some formal manner. "A day might be set apart," it says, "about the middle of September, to be observed with public meetings in every city, town, and village throughout the land, for the purpose of arousing and informing the people upon the subject of education, and its overwhelming importance to the preservation of republican institutions." If such a day should ever be appointed, it should be the 17th of September, the day of the adoption of the Constitution of the United States, and on which it was signed by Washington and the members of the Convention of which he was President. But it is enough for us, Gentlemen, to thank God, as we well may, for all that has been accomplished, and to go on with confidence and courage to the completion of our Trust, or of our own individual connection with it, remembering, as we all do, with profound satisfaction, that we are engaged in promoting nothing less than the great cause of our whole country, — the cause of that National Education which is not merely the corner-stone, but the whole foundation and only sure support, of Republican Institutions.







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